

NWX-US DEPT OF COMMERCE

Moderator Anthony Eremitaggio

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100 pm CT

Operator Welcome, and thank you all for standing by. Today's call is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. All participants are in a listen-only mode until the question-and-answer session for today's conference. At that time, you may press \*1 on your phone to ask a question. I would now like to turn the conference over to Kim Davis. You may begin.

(host) Good day everybody! Thank you for joining us today for another Census Academy webinar. Today's presentation is Your Business by the Numbers: Census Business Builder. We are recording today's webinar. It will be available on Census Academy with the slides in the next couple of weeks. I also want to remind everyone we do have a large number of participants on today's event, so we ask that you only ask one question and one follow-up at the end when we have a Q&A session, and if we don't get to all of the questions at the Q&A session or in the chat, any questions in the chat, we will follow up via email and provide information to you to answer your questions.

We also will be providing at the end of the presentation, contact information for both of our presenters. We will not be able to address any 2020 Census operation questions during today's presentation. Please refer to the [2020Census.gov](https://2020Census.gov) website for details. Assisting me today with hosting the event is my colleague, Deb Rivera-Nieves. And at the end of today's event, we'll be asking for your feedback through a short evaluation that will pop up when you close out of the event. We'll also put the chat, I'm sorry, the event evaluation link in the chat.

Our presenters today are Mr. Eric Coyle, who serves as a Data Dissemination Specialist for the US Census Bureau. His responsibilities provide, excuse me - he is responsible for building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders throughout the data dissemination. Mr. Coyle is primarily responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing data dissemination and outreach. He conducts data access workshops and presentations every month to a variety of organizations, local governments, tribal nations, businesses, media, universities, et cetera.

Joining him is Mr. Andy Hait, an Economist that serves as the Data Product and Data User Liaison in the Economic Management Division at the U.S. Census Bureau. With over 30 years of service at the Bureau, Andy advises on economic data products and conduct data user training and outreach. He also is the lead designer and coordinates developments of the feature product today, Census Business Builder. Mr. Hait holds a bachelor's degree in economics from Syracuse University and has his master's certificate in project management from George Washington University. Thank you both for sharing your expertise today, and the floor is yours, Eric.

(presenter) Thank you, Kim. I appreciate that introduction, and I'm very happy to be presenting today, along with my esteemed colleague, Andy Hait, who has a great wealth of knowledge in any things Census, if not all. So, quickly, I want to go ahead and just cover the agenda, what we'll be going over. One of the things I definitely would like to start off with when we get into any of these presentations on any of our products and tools or programs, I really love to just share a little bit about who we are as an agency, and what we do, and essentially what our mandate is. What is the job of the Census Bureau?

What are we mandated to do, and how to serve the public? And that is essentially to provide quality data, to be the leading source of data for the U.S.

So, our main mission, that most people are aware of, is that decennial count - is that once-every 10-year decennial census, which is currently ongoing, and I know many of you have probably already filled out your census form online or filled out the form - hard copy, however you've done it, we appreciate it. And I'm sure your congressional offices appreciate it as well, as many as - as much of any of those public services that need the funding based on those counts appreciate it.

But, in addition to counting the population once every 10 years, which we do as part of the constitutional mandate, Article 1, Section 2, we're actually out there conducting over 130 surveys every single year. So, that includes additional censuses that occur, like the economic census, which occurs every five years, and there's the - another word that we use, aside from decennial - but I'm going to let - I'm not going to steal Andy's thunder. I know he likes to share that magic word, so, he'll reveal that later on, so, stay tuned.

But, in addition to the decennial census, economic census and other many surveys and programs, we are doing this on behalf of different agencies that sponsor some of these programs. So, many of you are aware of those unemployment numbers that come out every single month, and many wonder where those come from. And a lot of people think, "Oh, yeah, it's coming from, of course, the Department of Labor or the Bureau of Labour Statistics." And while that, in fact, is true, technically the data is collected by the Census Bureau on behalf of the BLS.

So, they sponsor the portion of the current population survey, for example, and then, of course we give them the data, we collect the data, we give them the data, they get all the credit, and everybody's happy.

So, a lot of times, a lot of the data that you're seeing out there, you may not actually know where it's coming from, but more likely it is being collected by the Census Bureau. So, the largest of these national - these large surveys and programs that we have where we collect the data is, in fact, the American Community Survey.

And this is one that, although it was implemented in 2005, many people have still never heard of the American Community Survey. And this is important for a myriad of reasons, but we talk about it in today's presentation because this directly applies to many different aspects of business in terms of entrepreneurship or starting a business, expanding a business where you're looking at who your customers are, because the data that we collect from the American Community Survey, which goes out to 3.5 million addresses each and every single year, is actually then published each and every single year following the years of collection.

So, this data allows us to get more of a clearer picture of how the country is changing and how the population is changing by all the characteristics, the different trends that we see, and that's only available to that degree through the American Community Survey. Like, the decennial census, it is mandatory, so answers are required by law. And this data also helps us to apportion the 600 - over \$675 billion that the federal government needs to spend, to give out to the states every single year, support programs, schools, roads, hospitals, title grants, et cetera.

So, it's a very, very important survey. It's just as important fill this out as it is the decennial census form. Now, decennial census is going to give us that snapshot in time of what the country looks like once every 10 years, but that ACS, the American Community Survey, is going to give us that moving picture each and every single year.

So, we collect this data, like I said, 3.5 million addresses - averages out to over 290,000 addresses every single month. That does include your group quarters facilities. If you don't know what that is, that would be something like a college dorm, medical - or, I'm sorry, nursing home, a military barracks, any correctional facility, something of that nature would constitute a - fall into that category of a group quarters, which is also counted - surveyed each and every single year. So, we do cover over 35 topics with the ACS, and we do produce, actually, over 11 billion estimates every single year. That sounds like a lot, but that is absolutely true, and I'll show you how that comes to be in the next slide.

But it's important to understand that, with these estimates, there are some sort of limitations when it comes to our data, and mainly that's to protect privacy. Much like anything related to the decennial and any of our surveys and programs, privacy is paramount for the Census Bureau. And, by federal law, we are mandated to protect people's privacy, which means we cannot share anyone's personal private information with any agency, period, end of story. So, that applies to the American Community Survey, and that's extremely important. But what that also does is it limits the amount of data that we can provide for those smaller geographic areas.

So, for one year estimates, those are only available from the ACS with populations of 65,000 or more. So, if you have a population that is below the 65,000 threshold - population threshold, you're not going to get those one year estimates. You would have to look at possibly the one year supplemental estimates, which cover all population groups that are 20,000 or more. You don't get as much as you're going to get from those one year estimates, you know, that you do from supplemental, but you'll still get something. Now, with the five year estimates, that covers all geographies down to a geographic area we refer to as the block group. I'll get into that a little bit more here in a second. But the five year estimates - I always point out it's extremely important to note that with the five year estimates, it's not a - sort of an average or a mean of the one year estimates that are released.

So, if you try to make your own five year estimates by looking at the estimates for each of those one year estimates in a five-year - say, 2014-2018, the most current - you're not going to get the same number.

And the reason for that is because the five year estimate actually takes every single response, all the questions in those five years, 60 months' worth of data, and then pools an estimate from that very large amount of data. So, you get a much larger sample size, you get lower margins of error typically, and it's what allows us to get down to those really small geographic areas.

So, just keep that in mind. Now, as I mentioned, there are some privacy issues that make us - that would force us to possibly suppress data at those low-level geographic areas like the block group. So, just keep that in mind. That occurs usually in rural areas, I've found. I used to reside in the state of Nevada, which is a large rural state, and it's very difficult, even with the five year estimates, to get data when you're looking at very specific characteristics.

Now, what characteristics are we collecting or providing the public every single year? Well, this is basically your main sort of visual of the content that we are publishing every year from the ACS. So,

previously, prior to the implementation of the American Community Survey in 2005, you would have to get this - you could only get this data from the decennial census. So, decennial census - we've been doing it for a while - 1790 - Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution, right at the top. So, in 1940, we implemented something called the long form census, and that started to collect more of the characteristics of the population, not just the demographic data.

Not just, you know, sex, age, race, et cetera. So, because of that, in 1940, that kind of expanded out. Everyone gets a short form, then there was a sample of the population that would get the long form.

That grew quite a bit and, by 2000, that sample - that long form sample was about one in six households - very expensive to follow up on not just the entire country for a short form, but also for a long form as well. So, we had to mitigate the cost - population keeps growing, so therefore, of course, we need to go ahead and find a solution. That solution was the American Community Survey, which replaced the long form census. So, in 2010, short form only. For all of you that I know have filled out your 2020 census, you've noticed it's also short form for 2020. So that will continue on. The ACS replaced the long form, and now every single year, instead of having to wait every 10 years, we get all this great socioeconomic and housing and demographic data.

So, it's really fantastic to be able to look at this information and go, "Oh yeah, this is 35 plus topics," but in reality what you're actually looking at is over 450 characteristics of the population. So, that is really what you can glean from all this data because, when you start to cross-tabulate the variables, it's really amazing what you can look at.

So, you know, if I want to look at, you know, educational attainment or I want to look at marital status - I knew a businesswoman I met at a conference and she was looking at wanting to start a divorce - helping divorcees with a company and, you know, looking at marital status and being able to pinpoint count of very low-level geographies as to where she should target her business, she could do that with our data.

So, there's a lot of stuff you can do, school enrollment, of course, looking at various demographics, but you can cross-tabulate a lot of the stuff with different variables, and that's what gives you, ultimately, over 450 characteristics altogether. That's a lot of data, and that's where you actually can come to getting 11-billion estimates each and every single year - or more than. So, just as an example - is how, you know, you could, you know, want to look at some of the characteristics - because that's essentially what the ACS is telling you, right? That's your customers. That previous slide is showing you exactly who your customers are, and with the data and the mapping tools that we have on [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov) and Census Business Builder, of course, we can show you visually where your customers are.

So, that's one of the great things about Census Business Builder - is that you can actually look on your phone, on your tablet, or your computer and visualize exactly where your customers are, in addition to other features which I'll talk about later. But, yes, it can tell you to find your potential customers, whether it's different age groups or sex or family sizes, you know, looking at different employment and earning, different demographics and languages spoken at home; all very important, especially when it comes to marketing. Many will say that one of the number one reasons why businesses fail is due to lack of market research. Well, now you have a tool which is 100 percent free that allows you to do that. So, it's an amazing resource to be able to do this, to be able to, you know, look at and see exactly who and where your customers are.

Now, one of the other really important aspects of ACS data is geography, and that's not just when it comes to ACS data. That's all census data. I often find that geography is probably the most important aspect of our data. It is the framework of the data. Without the geography, that data just floats around in space, so you need to be able to figure out how do we tabulate it. And legal areas are pretty easy. Most people have a basic understanding of nation and states and counties, but what about the term, "places". Not everybody is familiar with that, and that can be confusing. If you go to a census tool and you see the term, "places," you may not know what that means. Well, essentially, the term, "places" is a term that we used to define or describe all cities and towns.

So, that does include unincorporated areas that we refer to as census-designated places. Those areas are also in Census Business Builder. So, we do have regular cities and towns and we also have the unincorporated areas on CDPs. Now, if you're not familiar with our geography, I'll tell you something of the key geographic areas that I often recommend to my customers - are definitely tracts and sometimes block groups depending on the - you know, the data, the research that they're looking at. But what about also the ZIP Code tabulation areas? What is that? Most people are familiar with ZIP Codes; not to code tabulation areas.

Well, essentially, the Census Bureau had to deal with the fact that the Census Bureau doesn't own ZIP Codes. Who does? Post office. So, the post office will basically do whatever they want with ZIP Codes, they'll add them, remove them, change them. So, for a statistical agency that needs some level of permanence, we needed to find a solution. Solution was ZIP Code tabulation areas which correlate mostly with about 98 percent of the ZIP Codes that you're already familiar with, but basically they're there to tabulated on ZIP Codes that have population associated with them. So, any of those ZIP Codes that are either attached to a PO Box or a large postal customer, you wouldn't obviously be getting any population data.

Well, CBB, Census Business Builder - amazing free tool that we have, actually does this for you. You can pop in a ZIP code, -it's boom - it's like an automatically - sort of crosswalk it into whatever that ZIP Code tabulation area is for you. It's pretty amazing that it does that. Additionally, you have the census tracts that I mentioned. Census tracts are another really important geography. When I deal with the business community, a lot of time they think that - "Oh, you know, can you get data down below the county?" Yeah, we can get it down below the county. We can get down to the city or town. "Can you get in a below that?" Sure, we can get data down to the ZIP Code. "Can you get it below that?" Absolutely. We can get it down to the tract. We can even get it down to the block roots. However, for the Census Business Builder, we can only get down to the census tract level, which are basically your areas of geography associated with populations that are subdivisions of counties, and they're meant to rest within the county boundaries.

Now, tracts are great because they're owned by us and we basically will make sure that the tract are relatively permanent and stay relatively permanent, meaning that if they change - if they change at all, it would be only once every 10 years, at the time of each decennial census.

So, all those planners out there had the fun-filled job of having to go out there and figure out which tracts went beyond our population threshold, which - we like to keep it at anywhere from 1200 to 8000, however, they are optimized for 4000. So, we tried to get those tracts to have about a 4000 population, but the threshold, the maximum number we want in those tracts, is no more than 8000. So, all those planners, once every 10 years, have the - like I said, the fun-filled job of having to go and find those

tracts that go beyond the threshold, what population has moved into those tracts, and then determine which of those tracts need to be split.

Now, the beauty of the tract is that, no matter how many times we split that tract, based on the population increase once every 10 years, that tract - the original frame of that tract will always stay the same. So, you'll get a view of that and what that looks like when we go to show you the Census Business Builder, but that is a great geography. Data suppression rarely occurs at the tract level, and it's great because it really allows you to define your communities at a much better geographic level that let's say your ZIP Code tabulation areas. Now, for mailers, that's going to be your bread and butter, but it's nice to know that you can actually get down below that level, well below that level, on the Census Business Builder.

Now, with that, what I'm going to do is go ahead and pass the baton over to my colleague, Andy Hait, who's going to talk about the economic programs and - here we go. Okay.

(presenter) Great. Thank you so much, Eric. So, actually, if you want to do me a favor, do you still have the ball? You can advance the slides? Okay.

So, again, my name is Andy Hait. I'm an economist at the US Census Bureau, and I want to thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedule today to learn about Census Business Builder. As Eric just said, American Community Survey is one of our most powerful demographic programs that we produce. Of those 450 or so characteristics that are published every year, 79 of them are in Census Business Builder.

So, one of the tips I want to start off with is to tell you that CBB was designed to make it easier for users to get access to key statistics from the Census Bureau. It was never intended to be a complete inventory, a complete resource for every single statistic, and that's been a key guiding principle, is identifying what are those key variables that users need based upon their feedback.

So, as you're using Census Business Builder, I would very much encourage you to let us know if you have feedback about the data variables that are in there, and as you use the tool, we kind of think of CBB as being the jump-off point. People come in and they learn about the Census Bureau and the data that we have available and then, as their needs start to grow - and, for example, let's say they decide that the age breakouts that we have in Census Business Builder are great, but they actually need a little bit more detailed information - looking at the population under 18 is fine. That's what we have in CBB, but if you wanted to know how many teenagers there are, those detailed age breakouts are available in the ACS, and we really encourage people to really sort of jump back and forth between tools like [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov) and Census Business Builder.

Now, whenever I talk about our business data, I like to talk about a couple of the key terms that we use in our Econ programs. The first of them is something called NAICS, the North American Industry Classification System. This is the system that we use to classify every business in the United States. And when I say every business, when I mean to say is every business establishment. We do not classify an entire corporation or an entire firm into a particular industry code. Instead what we do is, we classify each individual location of that business, or what we call an establishment, into its own specific six-digit NAICS code based upon the majority of the operations that it does at that physical location. Doing that classification that way allows us to publish the most detailed industry and the most detailed geographic data that we have at the Census Bureau.

It allows us to capture very, very diversified corporations that may have operations across multiple industries, and it allows us to capture each of their operations in the specific industry that they are working in. Many of you can think of very diversified companies in your communities that have retail operations at wholesale operations, and maybe even manufacturing operations and distribution facilities. Each of those different types of establishments - those warehouses and those manufacturing plants and those retail stores and those wholesale warehouses - each of those get their own NAICS code. We also have data on something called employer businesses and non-employer businesses. Employer businesses are businesses with paid employees. These are the businesses that we all typically think of when we're thinking about businesses in our local communities.

There are about 8 million employer businesses in the United States. The economic census, which is our biggest economic program that we conduct, covers just the employer businesses, but we have an annual program called non-employer statistics that covers the 25 million or so self-employed people. When you add together the employer business and the non-employer businesses, that truly gives you the total of all businesses in the U.S. We are pretty unique at the Census Bureau in that we have data on both of these types of businesses, and both employers and non-employers are available in Census Business Builder.

Finally, as Eric mentioned, we treat privacy very, very importantly at the Census Bureau. We take it very important. Title 13 and Title 26 of the US Code prevents the Census Bureau from publishing data that would identify individual companies. So, if Eric and I own the only two gas stations in our little town, the Census Bureau could not publish data on gas stations in our town because Eric could easily subtract his employment and his payroll and his sales from the published total, and know exactly what I pay my employees, know exactly what my sales are.

So, throughout our business surveys, including the data that's in Census Business Builder, you will periodically see cases where the data are suppressed, where the data are listed as not available, and in almost all cases that's because of privacy. Next slide, please.

Now, when we talk about those different surveys, the pyramid on the right-hand side is the way that I love to talk about the hierarchy and the information that is available from the 58 business surveys that we conduct at the Census Bureau. At the very top of the pyramid is our monthly and quarterly surveys. These are the most timely programs that we published, but they're also the least detailed. Most of our monthly and quarterly surveys only publish data at the national level, but there are a couple that publish data below the national level, and those are the ones that we've actually put in Census Business Builder. You'll see that in just a moment.

Below, there are annual programs. The annual programs are not quite as timely as the monthly and quarterly surveys, but they are very valuable because they publish more detailed statistics. Two of the annual programs that we conduct are in Census Business Builder. We'll talk about that in just a moment.

And finally, at the very bottom of the pyramid is the economic census. This is our baseline benchmark survey. If we did not get a complete count of every business in the United States every five years, it would be very difficult for us to conduct simple surveys every year and every month and quarter based upon those total number of businesses that we identified every five years. So, it's really important that we conduct a complete economic census. Next slide, please.

So, the very top of the pyramid is the indicators. The Census Bureau conducts 17 of the surveys that you hear about on the evening news. So, when you're sitting at home tonight and the reporter comes on and says, "The Commerce Department announced today that monthly retail sales for the month of July or excuse me, June, were X number of dollars," I want you to say, "Phooey".

Yes, the Commerce Department releases those data, but the Census Bureau actually conducts the monthly Retail Trade Survey. It is a very timely report. When you looked at the monthly retail data from March and April, we already started to see the impact of COVID-19 in those monthly surveys. We also conduct a couple of quarterly programs, including a program called the quarterly financial report. This is the only Census Bureau program that produces data on company level profits. Now, all of these monthly and quarterly surveys are simple surveys, and almost all of them published data only at the national level, but there are two surveys that produce data below the national level, and they are the two that are highlighted on this slide in red.

The first of them is our building permits data. Every single month, we publish information on new residential building permits that were issued. The data are published at the state and at the permit issuing area level. So, in the county that I live in, if I were to add an addition onto the back of my house, I would go to the Anne Arundel County permit office to pull the building permit to build that addition.

However, if my house was physically located in the city of Annapolis, Maryland, I would actually go to the city permit office and I would pull the permit from the city of Annapolis. In this Economic Indicators Survey by building permits, we published in the county and the place level. And we actually have the building permits data in Census Business Builder because we knew that having detailed information on new residential building permits could be very useful to small business owners and to all business owners because it gives you information about future economic growth.

When a builder comes in to put in some new homes, the very first thing they do is they pull the permits. You see that data in this report. Afterward, they start construction on that home. We have some construction indicator surveys. After that they sell that home, we have new residential home sales data. And finally, a family's move into those homes. When they move into those homes, of course, they now have to buy appliances and drapes and all kinds of other things that they now need for that house. That forces economic growth causes economic growth in the local community. So, the permits are how we start it all.

The next program is our trade program. And if you want to go ahead to the next slide, Eric, that would be great.

Every single month, we publish detailed data on imports and on exports. The data are published not only at the national level, but by state, region and port. Now we don't have the region and port level data in Census Business Builder, but we do have the state-level data. And the information are shown by industry, by commodity and by country of origination and destination.

I happen to be a bit of a beer nut. So, I couldn't resist actually coming up with a chart on the right-hand side that shows beer exports in blue and beer imports at the top. This chart is through February of this year. I'm told I'm a total slacker. I need to update this slide. It's about three or four months old already. But what I was really fascinated to see was that we export more beer to Chile than any other country. I keep telling my boss I need to research this and figure out why is it that so many people from Chile are buying American beer. Why that is our top beer export country. We include the international trade data



at the state level by industry in Census Business Builder because a lot of business owners are unaware that another business is like them are engaged in trade. That they may have customers not only here in the United States for the products that they make and sell, but they may actually have customers outside of the United States and often seen that there are other businesses like them that are exporting and seeing what ports that are exporting that those products out of those commodities out of is very eye-opening to business owners.

These data are available in Census Business Builder, but they're also available in the data tool called the USA Trade Online. I've provided the link to USA Trade Online here at the bottom of the slide. I would encourage you all to sign up for this access tool. It is totally free. Everything I'm going to be talking about today in our business surveys are all available to you for free. What I would like to tell people is nothing from the federal government is truly free. It's just that you already paid for it. So, if you've not already paid for that data, why are you not already using it? Next slide, please.

That brings us to the Economic Census. It is our most detailed and benchmark survey. Because it publishes the most detailed information that we have available in the Economic area census. We publish data for nearly every two through six-digit North American Industry Classification System code. There are a couple of exclusions we do not compensate for farms, NAICS 11. We don't publish data on colleges and universities.

And we don't publish data on a few other types of businesses like the United States Postal Service, and that is because there are other federal data providers that have that data. USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service publishes the Census of Agriculture. We actually did it through 1997. In 1997, we then gave it to USDA and they've been doing it ever since fabulously. The National Center for Education Statistics has information on colleges and universities. So, we don't collect data on colleges and universities in the Economic Census because they already do as well.

The upcoming census is our most detailed program in terms of geography. As Eric pointed out, we publish data down to the place level in the Economic Census. And we will be adding the Economic Census data for 2017 to Census Business Builder in version 3.1, which is coming out in about a week and a half, maybe two weeks. In fact, a little bit of a giving you a preview, actually sneak preview of what you're going to see in version 3.1.

The Economic Census also publishes data by other dimensions. Including business size, legal form of organization and even franchise status. A lot of times business owners are interested in opening a particular type of business. And maybe they're considering opening their business as a franchise. And they're not sure if spending that huge amount of money to buy that franchise and worth it. Are my sales of my burger business going to increase because I'm a franchise, or would it actually be better for me to be a non-franchise? That type of data are available on the Economic Census.

It's also our most detailed program in terms of the data variables. We publish information on establishments, employment, payroll and sales. But we also have over 200 unique variables that are tailored to specific industries. So, for example, in the manufacturing sector, we publish detailed information on capital spending, inventories, assets, depreciation, et cetera.

We also published something called Product Line Data in the Economic Census. These are the detailed products and services that businesses sell.

Now the last one I have here on the bottom of the slide is about a program called the Survey of Business Owners that used that we used to do every five years in the same years we do the Economic Census. SBO provided information on the race, ethnicity, gender and veteran status of the business owner. People really loved the data, but they always groaned that it was only available every five years.

So temporarily, we created a survey called the Annual Survey of Entrepreneurs. It was an annual program that just filled in the gaps in between the SBO years. In the middle of May, we released a brand new replacement for both of those surveys. Something called the Annual Business Survey. Like the SBO, the data publish data at the state, metro, county, and even place levels but it only covers employer businesses. So, first bummer. And number two, the level of industry detail is a little bit less than what we used to publish in the survey and business owners. So, I would encourage you all to check out the ABS data is also being added to Census Business Builder in version 3.1.

Next slide, please.

We already talked a little bit about this. This the ABS survey replaces SPO and ASC. Covers just the employer businesses. You can see the level of industry detail that is available to the national and state levels. Versus by county, metro and place is released on May 19. And I have provided here the link to the slide where you can get that information. Next slide, please.

Okay, now, here's the yucky part of the presentation. As we were entering the COVID pandemic at the Census Bureau, we started noticing that not only were existing businesses being impacted, but we were starting to see a decline in business formations that we measure as part of a program called the Business Formation Statistics or BFS. This used to be an annual program, but we get feeds every single week and month from the IRS and from Social Security Administration that provides information about new business formations. Companies that have applied for employer identification number with the IRS.

So, we realize that we could actually take this much more timely data and release it more frequently. So, what you're looking at right now is a screenshot of the data visualization that we have created for the business formation statistics that shows information as of week 22 in this year and it's actually a little late. It's actually we're now past week 22, we can get into it more detail. But this is information about how business formations have been affected by COVID. It's a really interesting program because we've had this program around for a long time, as you can see on the slide back to 2007. But now we are producing estimates every single week that shows the impact of COVID-19. Next slide, please.

Now, as I said, we remember noticing impacts on business formations but on businesses that will also already in place. So, we realized that it would be really great to conduct a special weekly survey for small businesses to help us understand how were small businesses being impacted by COVID-19. The surveys called the Small Business Pulse Survey, what you're looking at on the screen right now is the visualization that is available for this survey.

And this survey produced information on not only the total impact, the overall impact of COVID-19 on the business, but also specific questions on how their revenue changed or how they are employment changed. What was their supply chain? Did it change because of that? Did they have to change how they do their business? Are they now offering pick up and carry out and delivery services, but they never offered before? Because of COVID-19. Now as you can see on the slide, the data are published at the national and state level. But on the right-hand side, you can see they're also published by industry.

It should come as no surprise to any of you on the phone that NAICS 72, which is the second last bar on the right. The accommodation food services sector is the one that was most impacted has been most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. A very high percentage of businesses that said that they had a high a large overall impact, negative impact due to this. I did find it interesting that NAICS 22 which is utilities and NAICS 52 which is the financial insurance sector had a much lower impact. I guess at this time of the year when it's so hot, it's probably a good thing that our local utility companies have not had to shut down due to COVID-19 otherwise we would be sitting in our homes sequestered in our homes and it would be 95 degrees in my house right now. Fortunately, it's not. Next slide, please.

Which brings us to the Household Pulse Survey. Now disliked measuring the impact of businesses due to the COVID-19 household pulse survey produces information on how households were impacted by COVID-19. We will be adding the Small Business Pulse Survey data to CBB to household survey we are still debating whether we're going to add that. So again, the feedback that you might provide on these particular programs will be very, very useful to help us decide whether adding these data to CBD would be good or not. Next slide, please.

Which brings us to the last slide that I'm covering before I turn it back over to Eric and that is our local employment dynamics program. We have a program at the Census Bureau that takes labor force information that we pulled from a variety of sources, mashes it up with Census Bureau demographic and business data and produces a series of data products from those mashups.

There are four as you can see on this slide. The LODES database, which is displayed in on the map application, produces information based upon where workers live and where they work. So, if you happen to work in the transportation sector, or transportation planning sector and you're trying to understand where do all the workers that live in your suburbs, where do they work downtown. That type of information is available in the LODES database.

The upper right-hand corner is the program called Job-to-Job Flows. This looks at people who have changed industry or geography through a job change. For example, if you are curious to see where did all the workers that went to North Dakota during the oil and gas field boom, where did they come from? And what jobs did they have? What industries they work in prior to their move to North Dakota? Those types of data are available in the Job-to-Job Flow.

Just recently, we released a tool called Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes or PSEO. This looks at the earnings and employment of graduates from specific post-secondary institutions in the United States. Right now, there are four major university systems that are included but the program is being expanded.

The program is the top middle Quarterly Workforce Indicators is the program that we have in Census Business Builder. QWI produces quarterly data on employment but also includes detailed information on job creation, which is new jobs, job disruption, those are jobs that have been eliminated. Hires, separations and even turnover. The data are published by industry, by geography and by worker characteristics.

And we've included some of these QWI data in CBB as well because we knew that when business owners were thinking about opening a particular business and they wanted to see how are other businesses like them in the area, that they're thinking about opening their business, how are they doing? Are these businesses growing? Are they shrinking? Are they hiring new workers, or are they

letting people go? Having that information would be really useful to a business owner, because it helps them determine, yeah, maybe this isn't the greatest place for me to open this business. So, we included the QWI data in CBB.

Now with that, I'll turn it back over to Eric, so he can walk through the features of CBB that we added in the January release version 3.1. And then he's going to turn it back to me to talk about what's coming in 3.1. And I'm actually going to do a very quick demo of version 3.1 and give you a preview on the development side of this brand new tool. So Eric, back to you.

(presenter) Awesome. Thank you, Andy. That was really great. A lot of great information to share, especially with the new surveys that are out. And really, really, really important.

So, in terms of accessing the data, we've got a whole myriad of tools on census.gov. and with the new data.census.gov platform, which is a separate platform, which has since replaced the American Factfinder, the tool that we use previously to gather a lot of the data from various programs from early the ACS.

So QuickFacts are pretty simple way you can get some business data. We also have My Congressional District that takes data from the county business patterns. But here you know, our focus today is going to be on the Census Business Builder. So that is really one of my favorite tools from the Census Bureau because, you know, if you're looking at either QuickFacts or My Congressional District or any of these other data tools we have, as Andy pointed out, CBB is a really good place to start.

And if you want more data, because not all the variables are going to be in Census Business Builder, you know, again, the primary function was to make it easy to use, you would go to data.gov, for all the rest of the variables that are published from the ACS but the Census Business Builder is going to be a great way to look at all these other sort of program data that we have available. You know, but not all of it, you know, so you get kind of those key variables, as Andy mentioned that we determined, you know, ourselves and then also from user feedback, which is extremely important, and I'll talk about that here in a second.

So, we do have the new COVID-19 platform, which we encourage you guys to look at it in addition to a lot of other data tools that are out there. And with the Census Business Builder 3.0 addition, this tool has just gotten better and better and better over time. And a lot of that is based on the user feedback. So when you go to this, whether it's the Regional Analyst's Edition, or the Small Business Edition, the two different editions we have for this tool, I definitely encourage you to, you know, as you're, you know, using it, whether it's on your phone, a tablet, or on your home computer, you know, share your experience with the team. Andy takes all the feedback seriously. And I can tell you, even for me, I've had a lot of wishes, granted, more than I could ask for. And I know that other changes to this tool, especially when it comes to the 3.0, all the changes in 3.0 were actually based on user feedback.

So, not all wishes can be granted. But you never know. If it's something that, you know, we see that is, you know, something we can implement to improve the features and improve the function, maybe add a variable that we think is necessary. Yeah, it's possible. So, share your feedback, good and bad. We take it all, and we appreciate it all.

So, some of the structural changes, one of the major changes you'll see in 3.0, you'll notice is that we now have the ability to actually look at the variables in all the counties across the country. That was not

- you were not able to do that before. So if you wanted to look at the county-level data, you'd actually have to zoom down, is that zooming is the plus or minus buttons on the left top of your screen, to zoom into the geographic area, and then you'd be able to get down to that, you know, the county but as you zoom out, you wouldn't be able to get the full scope. So that is a really important change because if you are let's say a business owner or even a company that wants to be you know, looking at any particular variable, whether it's age groups, languages spoken at home, whatever it may be, this is really going to give you that sort of, you know, really wide, broad picture of that particular variable across the country which is fantastic. So, this is something new that we now we added.

Another change, really important change that I know made my ArcGIS folks very happy out there is the ability to not only download a shapefile which we had in the previous update but now you can upload your own shapefile as well. So that was a big change that made a lot of people happy. There's not a lot of tools that you can do that in census.gov, so this is great to have this feature in one of them.

In terms of the content, there was some demographic other data updated to basically the latest vintages that we have available. And we add the full NAICS, which was not previously available in the Regional Analyst's Edition. So that was a really great addition to the tool. Now, I can tell you, you know, if you're looking at, you know, whether it's the Small Business Edition or Regional Analyst's Edition, the view is going to be pretty much the same. You're going to be looking at pretty much a similar view when you go to the mapping view from the splash page. But in the Regional Analyst's Edition, what it allows you to do differently, is that it allows you to actually aggregate the data by the geography of your choice.

So that means I can if I'm looking at two different tracks and I want to combine the data or aggregate the data, it does that for you instantly by selecting them and making that choice. And you can do with two geographies, three, four or five however many you want. And it will instantly aggregate the data. And also, the margin of error associated with our estimates. These are estimates they are from a survey, it's a sample of the population. So, we are going to provide you with margins of error. And that's a really great thing about the Regional Analyst's Edition because that is something that is not so easily done when you start aggregating data, especially when you're looking at margins of error. And Regional Analyst's Edition of the CBB allows you to do that instantly and easily.

So that is the only tool that I'm aware of that you can do that within census.gov. And it's a fantastic feature in the Regional Analyst's Edition. So that is really made for the planners and researchers out there but anyone else that wants to be able to do that obviously can.

So, this is just looking at your mapping use for cities and towns, or places as we refer to them a lot of other tools that we have with your surveys. And when you want to get further down, you can by either typing in a zip code, using my location feature, a great feature of the tool, we have a data gentleman how to do that. So definitely go to setup Academy and check out our data gem for that if you want to learn more. We have a few more coming on this tool. So definitely go and check out our data gems on how to use CBB.

And then, so here you can see we can zoom in, you know, zip code level, know that our business owners out there love this geographic area, their mailers, et cetera. But we can go even further and that's what I talked about before when you want to go get that real detailed, you know, scope that of what that community looks like that is your census tract. That track level data is imperative to really getting a clear picture of what a community looks like. And that is wonderful that we actually have this in Census

Business Builder. You can see that goes well below the zip code level. And something looking at what here are the variables consumer expenditures for beer consumed away from home. And that's just one of the variables. There are many, many variables that you can look at going back to the previous are used to this was percent 21 years and over. I know that that variable was a suggested variable of a bar owner that want to know, where are my 21 and over? Great! Now, I want to know even further, how many people are consuming beer consumed away from home? Maybe another important aspect if you're a business owner. So, this is the kind of detailed picture you can get at the mapping level.

But in addition to mapping all this data, mapping all the variables that you can see in the tool, you can actually create your own profile as well for every single one of those geographies that you select. Now, keep in mind, if you're looking at track level data, you're not going to see any business data because we don't produce business data at the track level. We will have something like occupation data that from the ACS at the track level but for, you know, business data, you would need to look at the geographic areas like city or town or zip code tabulation, the area.

And keep in mind, the more detailed you go into the industry in terms of the NAICS codes, whether it's a two-digit which is the broad like retail trade, or the super detailed six-digit, which would be like a toy store, or toy, a very specific toy store. So that is something to keep in mind as well. So, the more detailed industry, probably less data available depending on the geography that you're choosing. So, there's always kind of a trade off there.

And now as far as the updates, I'll pass this back over to Andy. And we'll then go into our demonstration.

Andy Hait Okay, great. Thank you, Eric. So again, just talking a little bit about the data, the things that are being updated in version 3.1. We have a number of major updates. And what I'm going to do is I'm actually going to go ahead and share my screen. So you all can actually see the information in this brand new released version. So, bear with me for a second. I want to get out of here and actually share my screen.

So, here is a preview of version 3.1 of Census Business Builder. I would encourage you all to pay no attention to the URL here, that will not be the URL that you all will use when you access 3.1 in about a week and a half or two weeks from now. It'll be just a regular standard CBB URL. This URL is password-protected, so no one's sneaking around.

So, let's say I was interested in researching a home health care business in the DC metro area. The way I would use this tool is I would choose healthcare, I would choose home health care and then I would choose the particular geography that I want to research in this case, it's going to be Fairfax County, Virginia. So, I'm going to choose Fairfax County. And when I then click on Go to Map, the application is now going to zoom in on Fairfax County. Now the first thing I want to tell you about what's new in version 3.1 is, we have updated the vintage of nearly every single data product that is in this tool.

In January, we updated the American Community Survey data to the new 2018 vintage. But if I were now to go to all the business data, these data are now from 2018 and 2019. Our quarterly data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics is available through the fourth quarter of 2019. Our Workforce data from the quarterly workforce indicators is now again also available for fourth quarter 2019. Those building permits data that Eric talked about and I talked about earlier, those have also been updated to the 2019

vintage. And even the consumer spending data that we have purchased from EZRI. That information on how much do people spend on beer consumed away from their home that Eric showed you. Those information has also been updated. So, we always try to refresh this application whenever we have new data.

One little teaser, I'll also let you know, is that we are going to be updating Census Business Builder more frequently than we have in the last two years. Eric may actually not even have heard this yet. We just got the go-ahead to switch our releases from doing them twice a year - in July and December, to four times a year. So, after we have the release that will be going out in the next week or two. We will then have a release in October and then released in December.

What that is going to mean for you all is the lag between when the data are available. For example, quarterly data are available and when they show up in CBB will be substantially reduced. Ideally, someday we may get this tool set up where it'll update automatically. Right now, we have to do it sort of somewhat manually. So that's our first major update.

Now another major update that we made was information, the specific data that we produced from the Quarterly Workforce Indicators. Last year, we had a request from users saying, "Could you please take the employment data that you all have and produce breakouts by the worker age?" So, we added to Census Business Builder, the worker age breakout, so if you were looking at how many home health care businesses are there in Fairfax County, Virginia and you wanted to know what are the age of the workers in those businesses, we now have that break out available. So, here's workers that are 14 to 18, 19 to 21, 22 to 24, et cetera. So, we added that breakout last year.

Well, this year in 3.1, we had a similar request to do something just like that. But with our hires data. When you are a business owner and you're thinking about hiring new staff. Knowing something about the educational attainment of the hires of other businesses like you could help guide your decision of whether or not you're going to need to pay these people a lot of money, because typically the hires in industry are mostly college grads, versus maybe not quite as much money when the majority of the hires in that industry tend to be from people who don't have a high school education or have a high school education.

So we just added this Hires data in here as well. So, that's a major update there as well. Now, Eric already mentioned to you the ability for you to be able to see all the counties in the United States. When I used to be able to zoom this map out, if I got out to a particular point in time, eventually the map would stop refreshing. In January, we fixed this so I could keep zooming this map out, and eventually I would see the entire United States. So, if I was a business owner and I was truly willing to locate my business anywhere in the nation, I could use this tool to identify counties across the country that have certain characteristics, and then I could then zoom in on those counties and figure out whether or not I would want to open my business there.

Well, we added that zoom feature for the county level data, but we didn't add that feature for the other levels of geography. In this version of Census Business Builder, we now have fixed that too. So, now when I'm looking at data for a county, I can not only see the counties in the area, but I can now go in and look at all the cities and towns in that particular area. The map will refresh and it will show all the cities and towns here in the Washington DC area. It can let me look at the ZIP Codes. I can zoom in and see all the ZIP Codes in a particular county.

You can see this is a huge number of the codes, and - very scary - it allows me to see all the census tracts. Now, when we built this functionality we knew that we were going to have challenges with this. Some counties in the United States are geographically gigantic, like San Bernardino County, California is a physically really large county.

So, the ability to see all the counties in San Bernardino County means you have to have the zoom level set to a certain level to see the entire county. Well, that same zoom level used here in the DC Metro area, or even worse, used in the New York metropolitan area, would result in thousands of census tracts being pulled up.

Now, I am very happy. I had my fingers and toes crossed there for a second that the map was going to build fast. This is actually on a development server, so the fact that it actually built the map as fast as it did - I'm actually very, very happy. So, let's really tempt fate here and see what happens when I refresh the map to see how long it's going to take to actually render the map and build it. So, I'm a happy camper today. So, this was another major enhancement for this version.

The last enhancement I want to tell you that we made to CBB is we have a large number of users that are using Census Business Builder, Small Business Education, and specifically the Regional Analyst Edition, for emergency management purposes, for understanding the demographics and economics of areas that might be impacted by a hurricane, or that are being impacted by COVID-19.

Many times, these organizations want to be able to go in and customize this dashboard. They want to change these four additional data variables that are displayed on the screen to be four risk factor variables that they care about. They don't care about median household income; they care about population over 65. They don't care about percent high school degree or higher; they care about the percentage of people who don't have access to transportation, that don't have a car. They don't care about homeownership, right, they care about something else; the percentage of people that are renters.

So, in the past, they would be able to customize this dashboard, but when they left Census Business Builder, that customization was lost. The settings were not saved. Now, as many of you already know, this URL that we have in CBB can be saved. So, if I copy that URL and I send that URL to a colleague and they click on that same URL, both the URL for the map and the URL for the report can be saved, and when they click on it it'll bring them right back to this map, exactly how I've left it.

Well, in this version, we actually have now updated the URL so that any changes you all make to these dashboard settings now are also saved. We made a colleague of mine at FEMA when we did that because FEMA has been using the Regional Analyst Edition quite a bit to understand the potential areas that might be impacted by hurricanes and other types of natural disasters.

So, when you are accessing Census Business Builder, Small Business Edition, one thing that I will tell you is you will have to select a particular type of business in this edition, even though you may not care about the type of business. For example, if you were a grant writer and you're gathering information for your grant proposal and all of that data that you were interested in was all demographic statistics - they're all data from the American Community Survey - I've had grant writers say, "Andy, I know that you want us to look at the business data, but I really don't care about your business data. I just want to look at the demographic data. Do I still need to select a specific industry?" And the answer here in the Small Business Edition is yes, you do.



So, I would still have to go in and select a particular gas station, let's say, or particular type of business, even though I really don't care because, in order to be able to have the map actually build, I would actually need to select both the industry and the geography. In the Regional Analyst Edition, you do not have to select an industry, because we knew that that tool - people were going to want to be able to look at all the businesses in a particular area; not just one particular type. But, with that, I'm going to go ahead and stop sharing my screen and give the ball back to Eric so he can go ahead and close us out. All yours, sir.

(presenter) Thank you, Andy. I appreciate it. Thanks again. That was awesome. I am - I know you said you made your colleague in FEMA very happy, but I know you made - I can speak for myself and many other data users out there I know that are also extremely happy, especially with that tract - new change, which is awesome, and the ability to go back to - and see not just the data from the URL, but actually the dashboard changes as well. It's fantastic. So, thanks again. We appreciate all the changes. Like I said to all the attendees, this tool just keeps getting better and better, folks, but keep sending that feedback because there's always room for improvement. I thoroughly believe that. So, I want to make sure we have enough time for a few questions.

I'm going to go through this very quickly. I just want to point out we have some other additional resources out there on our interactive maps page, which I just showed you. We also have some great stories. If you want to learn about how data is being used directly, you know, and timely, check out our meric accounts. You can subscribe to any of these different features throughout the newsroom. Lots of great information, amazing stories showing you exactly how census data is impacting life in America. So, it's really fantastic. Definitely check it out. We also have other platforms you can, you know, share and follow us and like us on, of course all the social media platforms you see here listed. Any questions, you can go to our PIO office as well.

And then, you know, I know you guys are already familiar with CA - Census Academy - because you're here, but definitely share any, you know, questions that you have or any requests for free data training. You can get them through the Census Academy portal. You can also - any suggestions for courses, content, Data Gems, webinars. Look at our recorded webinars. It may take a little bit - maybe, you know, anywhere from, you know, depending on the time, up to a week to get these things posted, but we try to get them anywhere between 24 hours or, you know, more - 48 hours or more, depending. So, it could take up to a week.

As far as our contact information, Andy is your - you know, for all things economic and more, he's the guru. And, for any type of trainings as well, you can reach out to Andy or myself with any questions. That's what - we want to make sure we're available to you to provide that support. I'm a Data Dissemination Specialist and my job is to provide that free training, whether it's one on one, in group sessions, whatever you want. I can try to answer and get help if I don't have an answer for your questions. So, with that, let's go ahead - I know we've only got about five minutes for questions - a little over five minutes. So, Operator, can we go ahead and jump to the phones for a question?

(Operator) If you'd like to ask a question, press \*1, unmute your line and speak your name when prompted. To remove your question, press \*2. And we do have a question here from (participant). Your line is open.

(participant) Hello. Can you hear me? (presenter) Yes.

(participant) Oh. I recently got appointed to the Housing Authority in my local town, and we're going to try to decide whether we need more housing or more vouchers and I kind of liked your presentation because I think it's going to let me know whether we really have a housing problem or not. Can you point me in the right direction in how to determine whether I would need, or justify to the government more public housing?

(presenter) Eric, do you want to take that or do you want me to?

(presenter) Yes, sure. Yes, no problem. So, we have - on CBB, we have some housing data that may be of interest to you to look at there, or look at areas of population and then sort of be able to filter out also between the housing - because that's one of the features on Census Business Builder. You can do - you can actually select a variable and then add a filter, which would remove anything that doesn't apply within the filter you've created. So, that's really kind of a really cool feature in terms of Business Builder as well. Now, here we're just kind of giving you a basic overview. We want to make sure you know that this tool is out there, that it exists. If you want more, like, one-on-one training, webinar kind of thing, I'm more than happy to set that up.

I can do it myself or have another data dissemination specialist, may be more closer to where you're geographically located that would be more familiar with your area, that can also do it as well. So, it's just another free service that the Census Bureau provides.

But I would look at the CBB and look at the data there, and then also go to [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov) and start pulling some of the housing data that's available there and sort of cross tabulated with the population data that we have. And then you can also look at poverty and income statistics, because, you know, all those that you saw in the presentation in terms of the characteristics, you'll find the most robust, you know, data available through [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov). Census Business Builder is still a good place, like we said, to start, to kind of get an overview and to get an understanding, individualize the data.

You can do that as well in American Community - or [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov), but it's going to everything else. You'll get, you know, lots of different data tables. And the mapping view, I have to say, is still a work in progress at [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov), so, just keep that in mind. That's why I like Census Business Builder. I love the map view. One of the features that you can do in the map is you can actually change it. Geographers are not huge fans of that multicolored rainbow look, so you can actually go to a two or three tiered color scheme instead, which is I guess the more - for geographers, more accurate depiction of a map and data. So, just some of the cool things that you can do in Census Business Builder as well, in the mapping feature.

(participant) Thank you.

(Eric Coyle ) But yeah, absolutely.

(operator), your line is open for your question.

(participant) Thank you, Andy and Eric. I'm interested in your data on warehouses available. Are they counted at all, in case a business is located somewhere else and they want to set up a distribution center of even PPE's type of things? Where is that information found - available warehouses?

(presenter) Right. So, in our economic programs that we conduct at the Census Bureau, warehouses actually are in their own specific industry. The transportation and warehousing sector, which is NAICS

4849, is the sector that warehouses are classified in, and those warehouses are actually broken out into a quite detailed amount of breakout, based upon the types of goods that they are - that they store at those warehouses.

So, for example, there is a specific NAICS code for refrigerated warehouses for produce and for other food products, as opposed to other warehouses that store chemical products or a variety of things like that. So, warehouses definitely have detailed data.

In Census Business Builder, in the Small Business Edition, we did not specifically include a button just for warehouses because, to be quite frank, most small business owners are probably not thinking about opening a warehouse. That wouldn't be one of the more common types of businesses that small business owners open. But you may have noticed that below those buttons in Small Business Edition is a search box where you can type in the word "warehouse", and it would actually bring up all of the different industries that are related to warehousing.

One quick point I will also make mention of is, we classify warehouses - or we tabulate warehouses that are not only regular third-party warehouses - meaning they are a warehouse that a company operates, and that they store goods in that warehouse for themselves and for others, so, they operate essentially is a third-party warehouse. But we also include in the warehouses data, warehouses that companies operate on their own behalf.

(participant) I see.

Andy Hait So, for example, if you were a manufacturer, and at that same manufacturing facility you also ran a warehouse that you used to store the materials that you consume in making products in your factory, as well as storing the final goods before they are shipped out the door, that physical address, that one business, would actually get two forms from us. They would get one form for their manufacturing operation, and they would get a separate form for their warehouse, because we recognize that capturing both the third-party warehouses and the warehouses that are owned and operated by a specific company for their own purposes - both of those types of warehouses are really important.

One thing we do not have that I will tell you is, we do not publish data on excess warehouse capacity. There isn't information that says this particular warehouse is full versus this one next-door is half - is only half full. But I know that there are other third-party data providers that do provide information on warehouse capacity and usage. If you would like - my email address was there on the previous slide - please feel free to send me an email; Andrew.W.Hait - H-A-I-T @Census.gov. Send me an email that I'll actually send you the links to those other data providers.

(participant) Thank you, Andy.

(presenter) You're welcome.

(operator) There are no additional questions in the queue.

(host) Okay.

(presenter) Okay. I...

(host) Thank you so much. I'm sorry. This is your co-host, Deb Rivera, and I just wanted to say, guys, thank you so much for this wonderful presentation. We did single out a couple of questions from the chat that we'd like to ask you now. One of the questions came from (participant), and that question is, "Does data in the Census Business Builder go down to block groups?"

(presenter) So, the short answer right now, Deb, is no. The finest level of detail that we go down to is census tract, but this user is not the first person who has asked us to drill down to block group level data, and so we are actively working on adding that drill-down as another level of geography that is available in CBB. I will tell you that I would love to get additional feedback from users about the specific data variables that they would want to see at the block group level because, as Eric pointed out, when you start getting down to very, very small geographic areas, below the census tract level, the sampling variability of the data in the American Community Survey starts to become more apparent, and those margins of error really start to climb.

So, if users are interested in basic data like population by block group or age breakouts by block group, then that's probably not something that would be too scary to add. But if they want us to be able to look at things like household income at the block group level, variables that vary more within a particular geographic area, those sampling errors - those margins of error might be so big that we may actually not want to put that in CBB.

And that's, again, sort of one of the guiding principles of this tool. We knew that the vast majority of users of this tool were people who were not so familiar with the Census Bureau, they don't know about our programs, they have a very documented need for the data, but they aren't sort of our typical power user. And, in many ways, that means that we sort of have to hold their hand a little and help them not shoot themselves in the foot with the bazooka. We want to make sure we're presenting the right data to them, while at the same time not going crazy and exposing them to data that really is not of as high a quality as we would normally like them to be using. So, yes, we are investigating adding block group level data to CBB.

(host) Okay, great. Thank you very much. And the last question that we're going to address today is on the topic of updates, and this question came in from participant, and participant wants to know, "Are similar updates being made to the Regional Analyst tool?"

(presenter) Yes. So, every time we update the Small Business tool, we also update the Regional Analyst Edition. Those two editions of CBB share so much base code that it actually would be extremely difficult to release one and not the other, and there will actually be some additional updates to the Regional Analyst Edition in version 3.1 that I didn't cover today in the primarily Small Business Edition-focused one. One of the additions is the ability to build multi-region geographies of a disparate group of geographies.

So, for example, if I wanted to build a region of counties, places, ZIP Codes and tracts - I really want to mash up - kind of a mess - that, you could do before, but some of the controls that we would normally place on that to stop you from doing something silly, we didn't put on. We are adding those controls now.

So, it'll be a lot easier to build large, very different regions, and we've substantially improved the bookmarking capabilities in CBB. We have a lot of emergency managers that are creating pre-defined regions of hurricane impact areas or areas of their counties that are below - you know, that are below a

certain level of elevation that are subject to flooding, and they want to be able to save those settings and come back to them regularly. That ability was hard to do in previous editions of CBB. It'll be much is your now, especially for GIS professionals. So, yes, we will be updating the Regional Analyst Edition as well.

(host) Excellent. Thank you so much. Okay, so, with that, I want to once again say thank you so much to Andy and Eric for this extremely informative and dynamic presentation. And also, thank you to everyone for joining us today and participating and sending all of your fabulous chat questions. We want to remind you about the evaluation that you'll receive when you exit this presentation. We would really appreciate it if you could fill it out. We do value your opinion, and would like to know what topics you'd like to see in the future, or perhaps how we can improve on our presentation. So, thank you again for joining us. We look forward to seeing you in our next presentation.

Our next webinar in the Census Academy webinar series will be on August 11, and that will be in, "On the Map: The Road to Employment Dynamics". That's going to be at 11 a.m. Eastern time. So, thank you again for joining us. Stay safe and have a great day. Thank you, all.

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